The Lions' Pride

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY • FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017 • VOLUME LVI NO. 20 • SINCE 1965

Saint Leo Student Runs His Own Charity

By Niclas Bez
Staff Writer

College students know that studying can be stressful and full of challenges. Not a lot of students find time to get involved in clubs or organizations. However, few students, like Joseph Fuller, a Saint Leo junior, is able to run his own charity while managing to balance the stressful studying and being on an athletic team.

Fuller is a Management major from Sidney, Ohio, where he attended Lehman Catholic High School. In high school, he was part of the cross country team. However, he was not like the student he currently is in Saint Leo. In fact, in high school, due to his efforts to become a successful athlete, his grades became worse and he needed to change something.

"I have discovered that time management and balancing things in your life is the key to success. In high school I never had good grades — my grade point average suffered because I didn't balance my time. It wasn't until I started my search of a college that I realized, if I wanted to be successful in life, I would need to invest myself into my academics," said Joseph Fuller, who is called Joe by his teammates.

While he was looking for a university where he can grow as an athlete, receive a good academic education, and continue his activities in the church, he found Saint Leo University. In 2014, he became a Saint Leo student, starting the new chapter of his life almost thousand miles away from home.

"I know it can be a difficult decision for some students to choose which college they want to attend, but for me the choice wasn't that difficult. I knew exactly what I wanted in a university. I wanted to compete at the NCAA level. I wanted a school that wasn't in a big city—it had to have a strong sense of community, family and call to service. Lastly, due to my faith it needed to be a Catholic University."

From the beginning on, Joseph was very active in the cross country and track team, the Knights of Columbus, and helping with the Special Olympics. With the Saint Leo Cross Country team he won three Conference Championships, one Regional Championship and qualified for the National Championship twice.

All these activities didn't hold Joseph back from going the extra mile. He always kept looking for opportunities to give back to the community. Then, in 2016, shortly after his twenty-first birthday, he found a real need that he wanted to solve.

"There is an overwhelming problem that numerous student-athletes around the United States are currently facing. They lack proper running shoes. There are so many runners that just do not have the money to purchase additional pairs of shoes. On the other hand, there are runners out there who are able to purchase a new pair of shoes every season, or when a new model becomes available, but many of these individuals don't know what to do with their old pairs of shoes and end up tossing them out, or putting them into storage," said Fuller.

Photo from @JustRunFuller

Fuller's charity has expanded; In fact, in Jan. he set up a booth at Clearwater Distance classic.

With this motivation, he started the I Play Track Foundation. Over his running career throughout high school and college, he met many runners that could not afford proper running shoes or had to use duct or athletic tape to hold them together.

"The name will make sense to any athlete who chose running as their main sport. When someone finds out you are an athlete, the question they most often ask is, 'What sport do you play?' It can often be an annoyance trying to explain you run cross country, or the events you run in track, so I took an annoyance, made it a positive, and now I proudly tell people, I play track," said Fuller.

He started raising awareness of his organization through social media and running events. With a catchy name and a lot of hard work Fuller was able to collect many shoes and already distributed many of them to athletes in over five states. However, he already faced his first challenge in the history of his young organization.

"I simply do not have enough sizes to meet the requests I have for shoes. I think people would be shocked by the demand for these types of shoes. I would like to see the future of running get better, and I truly believe this organization will be able to make that happen. I have seen how far a small spark of motivation can carry someone," Fuller said.

Currently, the I Play Track Foundation is only accepting donations in form of running shoes and spikes, and is not yet prepared to take monetary donations. Joseph found a way to combine his passion for running with his desire to give back to the community. He has high ambitions on where his charity is going. The outspoken goal of it is to provide proper fitting running shoes to every student that cannot afford them.

Follow Joseph Fuller's organization on their Facebook page and consider donating.

Photo provided by Joseph Fuller

The current inventory of the foundation is good, but not enough to fulfill the demand.

Photo provided by Joseph Fuller

Fuller collects donations at events as well, including a 100-mile Ultra Marathon.

Editorial

A Dog's Safety

By Jordan Cardenas
Contributing Writer

It is not uncommon to see the phrase "No animals were harmed in the making of this film" in movie credits with animal actors. People love their furry friends, so it's heartbreaking to see them in trouble or distress, be it staged in a film or in real life. Despite how many laws that have been made to protect animals and maintain their safety, some incidents slide through the cracks. The controversy in the new film "A Dog's Purpose" seems to be the latest infamous case.

On one of the sets of the film, a German Shepherd named Hercules was seen being guided to a pool of raging waters, as he clearly resisted and was clawing the surface. In the video, voices of unidentified crewmembers can be heard with little concern for the dog until a member of the staff ordered to "Cut it!" and then handlers rushed to the dog. The video evidence was posted online by TMZ and spread like wildfire throughout the news media and social networks. Many people became outraged and called for boycotts of the movie, according to Variety. As a result, Universal Pictures cancelled the movie's intended premiere in Los Angeles that was initially scheduled for Jan. 19.

This is far from the first time questions of animal cruelty have been raised throughout Hollywood's history, though. While it was far more common in cinema's early years, there are still a number of incidents that have occurred more recently. According to NY Daily News, the 2012 film adaptation of "Life of Pi" involved the abuse of a tiger, evident in leaked footage of the handler proudly whipping the animal. Other incidents reported by the American Humane Association documented a situation in which one of the dogs in the film "Eight Below" was repeatedly punched in the diaphragm to break up a fight.

However, an older yet more severe set of cases occurred in the Japanese film "A Kitten's Story," known in America as "The Adventures of Otis and Milo." Though many of its cases remain unconfirmed and the film is still approved by The Humane Society of the United States, there are rumors of 20 kittens having died during production. It's also rumored that one cat's paw was intentionally broken in order to make it limp on camera, according to A.V. Club.

There also lie many concerns with the film itself, such as the cat character Milo surviving fights against crabs, birds, a snake, and even a huge drop from a cliff, as well as the dog character Otis fighting a bear in one scene. Additionally, rather than having the usual "no animals were harmed" disclaimer, the credits instead state, "The animals used were filmed under strict supervision with the utmost care for their safety and well-being," which is a far more vague message.

So many existing cases beg the question as to whether or not animals should continue to be filmed in Hollywood films. Are the handlers and trainers acting responsibly? Are most animals truly being treated properly in the industry? Should they continue to be represented in film?

It's impossible to deny that these cases of animal cruelty in the film industry exist, but there are still many films starring animal actors that are treated appropriately and kindly. Four of the cats who played the character Salem Saberhagen—Elvis, Lucy, Salem, and Witch—in the sitcom "Sabrina the Teenage Witch" were all properly trained and cared for as each cat was used for specific roles, according to executive producer Nell Scovell. Other popular films with animal actors show a lot of behind the scenes footage of how they properly treat their animals. According to the New Zealand Herald, the 2005 film "The Chronicles of Narnia" had ten wolf and wolf-hybrid actors who were carefully trained and tended to.

Unfortunate cases of animal cruelty do still exist, both in real life and in the film industry; but organizations like the American Humane Association have improved their standards for animal safety and have developed proper training strategies over the years. Representatives are now typically on scene to judge whether or not animal actors are in danger. However, some situations are subjective as to whether or not they are classified as abuse, since people today still cannot properly communicate with animals.

Since the controversial footage was posted online, the American Humane Association has completed an investigation on the infamous case in "A Dog's Purpose," according to The Verge. On Feb. 4, it was reported that the footage was "deliberately edited for the purpose of misleading the public and stoking outrage," with two videos being spliced together. Though Hercules showed some signs of distress, he "was not forced to swim in the water at any time." The American Humane Association agreed that Hercules should have been handled more gently, but claims there were no confirmed incidents of abuse.

No further cases of animal cruelty were reported in "A Dog's Purpose." While it is assured that Hercules is in a healthy condition now, there is no further evidence for or against him having been harmed. "A Dog's Purpose" was released in theaters on Jan. 29, but it seems that the damage has already been done, bringing in a modest earning of $20 million on its opening weekend as well as many people having panned the film with low ratings online.

Here's what you missed online this week at www.prideonlinedot.wordpress.com

Bitcoin - The Imaginary Money

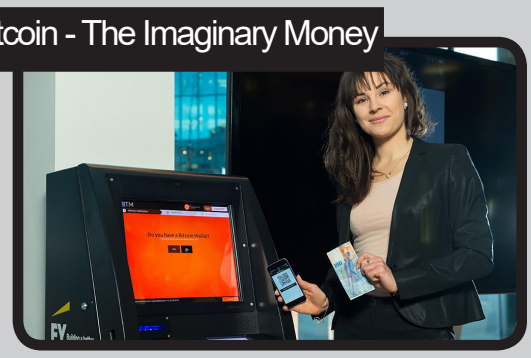

Photo from @haq4good

Bitcoin is online currency that not many people truly understand. To learn more about this currency, in which its value skyrocketed from 30 cents to 770 dollars in a matter of years, read the article online.

2016 - The Hottest Year Ever

Photo from @savingoceans

2016 is the hottest year ever recorded. To learn more about how last year was the hottest ever and how politics play a role in this, read the article online.

Celebrating All Types of Love

Photo from @sharisberries

There are many types of love that Valentine's Day doesn't focus on. To learn about the different types of love and how some unconventional types can be celebrated, read the article online on Valentine's Day.

Newsroom

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- Faculty: Include name and rank
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Campus News

The Talented Sijing Ye

By Chynna-Rose Foulkes
Contributing Writer

Bob Marley once said, "One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain."

On Feb. 8, The School of Arts and Sciences presented "A Concert of Music by Frédéric Chopin," Chopin being one of Poland's greatest composers. The concert took place at the Saint Leo Abbey Church at 7 p.m.

Sijing Ye was the virtuosic pianist that performed the selected Chopin pieces. Ye was born in Southern China. She has been playing piano from the age of six years old and is still practicing to be a perfectionist pianist.

"Piano is life," Ye said.

Ye has participated in numerous piano competitions in China and abroad. She is a versatile young virtuoso, with interests not only in piano, but also in singing, dancing, chess, and sports.

"I also made a sound system for one of the VR Home Theatre," Ye added.

Jennifer Orendorf, administrator of events and special programs in schools of arts and sciences, hosted the concert. Orendorf chose Ye because "Saint Leo has a relationship with the Miami International Piano Concerto." The Senior Development Officer, Francis, contacted the Miami International Piano Concerto to plan arrangements for Ye to perform at Saint Leo University.

Orendorf predicted that the concert would be "beautiful because it was going to be in the Saint Leo Abbey Church."

Ye performed all her pieces on a Steinway Concert Grand Piano, which was provided by the "The Piano Gallery" in Clearwater, Florida. Many thanks are owed to Richard Behnke for donating to the concert.

Ye performed a few amazing pieces, including:

- Nocturne No. 7 in C-Sharp Minor, Op 27, No.1(1835)
- Nocturne No. 8 in D-Flat Major, Op 27, No 2 (1835)
- Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, Op 23 (1831-1835)
- Ballade No. 2 in F Major, Op 38 (1836-1839)
- Ballade No. 3 in A-Flat Major, Op 47 (1841)
- Ballade No. 4 in F Minor, Op 52 (1842-1843)

The Assistant Professor of Music at Saint Leo University, Cynthia Selph, said that "Sijing Ye played with such passion and virtuosity; and the performance was exquisite and outstanding."

"Ye is a highly talented musician and hopes that I can one day play like her," said Stephen Miller, a sophomore religion major and music minor.

Photo by Chynna-Rose Foulkes

Ye prefers a Steinway Concert Grand Piano when it comes to tickling the ivories.

Photo by Chynna-Rose Foulkes

Ye garnered a large turn out for her concert and her performance received a standing ovation at its end.

Miller was interested in coming to watch "A Concert of Music by Frédéric Chopin" because he too is a pianist who enjoys Chopin's music.

Alex Yoo, a sophomore accounting major, said "I thought the performance was phenomenal; the notes were hit right on the dot and the music was extraordinary."

Yoo also stated that he was "very pleased with this event and would go to another event like this."

The students were speechless after Ye's performance. Tawana Dayes, a freshman criminal justice major, said "It was an amazing recital. I'm lost for words."

"I've never heard this type of music before and I wanted to experience something new," Dayes added.

Angela Lazzaro, a sophomore psychology major, said "I would love more events like this."

Ye encourages young aspiring musicians to "always enjoy making music." The audience truly enjoyed the concert and students are ready and willing to attend more event like this. Students should be on the look-out for upcoming events, such as "Saint Leo City Limits: Sweethearts" on Feb. 15 in the Black Box Theatre and "Canta Italia!" on Mar. 8 at the Saint Leo Abbey Church.

Photo by Chynna-Rose Foulkes

Piano prodigy Sijing Ye played the variation of Chopin compositions with great enthusiasm and passion.

National

SLU Syrian Student Reacts to Executive Order

By Rafal Matuszczak
Staff Writer

On Feb. 4, the Department of Homeland Security announced that all the actions associated with President Donald Trump's executive order which had banned people from Libya, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Sudan, and Somalia from entering the US had been suspended. Even though the people are now able to enter the country again, the new order had many implications which were unfortunate for immigrants from countries included on the list.

On Jan. 17, Trump signed an executive order that banned citizens of seven countries to enter the United States. The main reason of the executive order titled "Protection Of The Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into The United States" was to prevent radical Islamic terrorists from entering the country, according to CNN.

The order was then blocked entirely on Feb. 4, 2017, by the Department of Homeland Security which resumed regular border protection controls the following day, according to CNN.

Trump's executive order has been criticized by many people all around the world. A senior Computer Science student at Saint Leo University, Ammar Mohrat who came to the United States to begin his studies and seek asylum also elaborated on the issue and expressed his negative opinion about the order after it was signed.

"I believe that the executive order presented by Donald Trump is very unfair. Most of the terrorist attacks that happened in the US did not involve any of the people from the banned countries," said Mohrat.

Mohrat noticed that the executive order was harmful not only to those people who wanted to seek asylum in the US, but also for those who have already become legal immigrants.

"It is also harmful to legal immigrants, or even non-immigrants who have visas, and who went through the process of obtaining them, because now they are not able to come to the country," added Mohrat.

The student mentioned a story of Niki Mossafer Rahmati who studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"I just talked to one of my friends who presented me a story of an international student who received a scholarship at MIT, and he was supposed to come here. Because of the executive order he was not able to do it, and he was sent back to his home country. It makes no sense," said Mohrat.

Rahmati, who visited her home in Teheran, Iran during for the winter break was prevented from boarding her connecting flight to Boston on Jan. 28 as Iran was on the list of countries mentioned in the executive order, according to college.usatoday.com.

The article includes information that Rahmati was blocked on the border even though she holds a multiple-entry student visa.

Mohrat indicates that people who have already become legal immigrants, including himself, should not be affected by the ban policy as it results in many unfortunate situations.

"I am a legal citizen here, I [am in the process of obtaining] my green card, and I should have the right to travel any time I want. Because of the executive order, I cannot do it, because I will not be able to come back. Now, I have to change all my plans, because I planned to travel, and meet my family, which I did not see for the last six years. The ban is planned to last for a limited amount of time, but you never know what's going to happen next and how it will affect my rights," said Mohrat.

The student notices that there are refugees seeking asylum for whom the process of obtaining all the necessary documentation was not easy. Nevertheless, the ban prevented them from coming to the US.

Photo from@FRCdc

In his first seven days in office, Trump signed six executive orders; whereas in 2009, Obama signed nine executive orders in his first ten days in office, according to The Washington Post.

"There are refugees who went through an excessive screening process that takes up to 3 years, and who are not able to come to the US right now. Here are about 200 Syrians who were supposed to come to the U.S with the help of catholic organizations, but they won't be able to make it," said Mohrat.

Luckily for the refugees, they were able to proceed with their immigration process, and 100 Syrian refugees rushed into the country on Monday, Jan. 19 after the executive order was partially suspended by the Federal District Judge, James Robart, according to breitbart.com.

Mohrat is concerned about the issue as if he was not in the country such story could happen to him, and it is unknown where the student would be living his life right now.

"It could happen to me, and I would never be here then. I don't know what I would do, but I would definitely have to travel the world or stay in Jordan where I probably wouldn't have the same opportunities that I have in the U.S.," said Mohrat.

Despite all the happenings, and chaos associated with the temporary ban issued by President Trump, Mohrat indicates that he is thankful for the opportunity that the United States as well as Saint Leo University gave him, and he wants to believe that Trump's administration will also bring some benefits for the county.

"I still believe in American people, and I believe they chose Trump for other reasons that will let the country succeed," concluded Mohrat.

Photo from @vickivellios

There were protest against the Executive Order across the country.

A Profile on Mohrat

Ammar Mohrat is a senior computer science student at Saint Leo University. Mohrat comes from Syria from where he escaped to the United States as a refugee as he perceives it to be a land of an opportunity.

"I wanted to come here because I believed in the American freedom and the land of opportunities. And because I had no other choice I wanted to continue my education, and Saint Leo was the only school that wanted to help me," said Mohrat.

Before attending Saint Leo, Mohrat was studying computer engineering at Al-Baath University in Homs, Syria. The student had to leave his home country as he felt endangered by the government. He indicates that if he stayed in Syria, he might have been killed.

He received help from Saint Leo University through the program designed for Syrian students, and after completing seven full semesters at the university campus, he will graduate in April.

"My experience has been very good so far, and I love it here. I haven't experienced anything against me, and Saint Leo community is so great," said Mohrat.

Photo from @Ammar Mohart

Mohrat wants Americans to know more about his home country. He decided to wear traditional Syrian clothes for a presentation he gave in his folklore class at Saint Leo University.

As one of the refugees, Mohrat indicates that it is important to resolve the refugee crisis and there are two solutions to the problem that in his opinion might help to achieve the goal.

"I believe that for refugees we either help them go back home and help them establish a new democratic regime, or we help them to have a better future in other countries until the war in Syria is over," said Mohrat.

National

Florida Universities Up Mental Health Budget

By Rebecca Hugh
Advertising Manager

Florida's 12 public universities have developed a two-year plan to increase the presence of police officers and mental health counselors on campus, according to Jacksonville.com. In fact, the public university system's Board of Governors met in the week of Sep. 18, 2016, and they emphasized that the campus security and mental health services are among their top priorities.

For the 2017-2018 academic year, those 12 public universities proposed a budget request of about $14 million, to be used on hiring more campus police officers and mental health professionals: psychologist, counselors, psychiatric nurses, and prevention specialists.

Currently, eight out of the twelve universities do not meet staffing standards, according to Jacksonville.com; the inadequate staffing leads to wait lists, fewer counseling sessions, and the need for students to rely on off campus services, which are not covered by student health insurance.

As stated by PalmBeachPost.com, data collected since the Fall of 2008 show that the number of students seeking counselling services rose to 48 percent in the 2013-2014 academic year, and the counselling sessions increased to 67 percent in 2016.

"These students are suffering and we need to give them the tools to survive and thrive ... and it appears we're not doing that," said Board of Governors member Darlene Jordan, according to the Miami Herald.

Two counselors noticed an increased amount of students needing treatment for mental health; both Ernesto Escoto, a licensed psychologist and director of the University of Florida's counseling center, and Carlos Gomez, a licensed psychologist and director of Florida State University's counseling center, noticed a "lack of resiliency" among university students, in comparison to previous generations, when it comes to coping with setbacks like a low grade, a relationship breakup or roommate problems. Another contributing factor to student's "lack of resiliency" is the competitive environment in universities.

"A number of the students we see lack the resiliency skills necessary to bounce back from setbacks," said Escoto, according to PalmBeachPost.com, "They have not failed much in life and now they get a 'B' or a 'C' in class and all hell breaks loose."

Florida State University (FSU), a public state university, has a shortage of counselors. Gomez estimates that there is one mental health professional for every 1,900 students, according to PalmBeachPost.com. This is more than the 1,000 to 1,500 students per counselor ratio set up by the international association of counseling services.

To help resolve this issue the Florida State University counseling center created a "treatment coordinator" position, in order to help students who get free health care on campus, find and pay for off-campus services.

However, when Gomez started working on campus about two years ago, he said that students faced a five-week waiting period before being offered help. He observed that the staffing problems made it difficult to provide extended counseling services.

"What we can't do is see every student who walks in our door for psychotherapy," said Gomez,

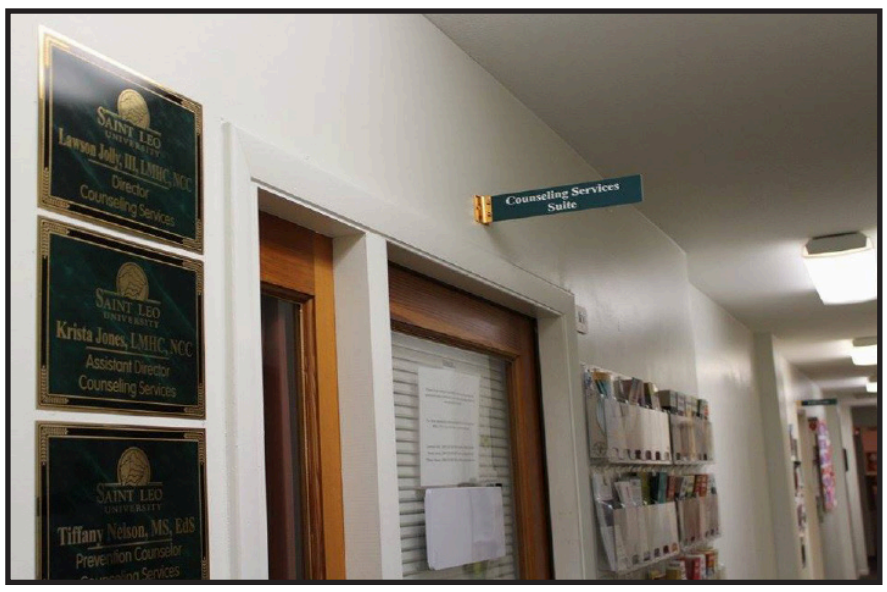


Photo by Wakens Leonard

According to Lawson Jolly, during the academic year 2015-16, 359 of 1531 residential students used counseling services on the Saint Leo campus. This is about 23 percent of residential students.

according to PalmBeachPost.com, "We are referring in record numbers out into the community."

Similarly, University of Florida in Gainesville, another public university, refers students to an off-campus counselling service provided by the Alachua County that only requires a modest co-payment.

Compared to other Florida Universities, the Saint Leo University population is "fortunate that the university provides effective mental health counseling and prevention services, which are free to all students. The wait time for appointments is very short. Clients are seen immediately for an urgent concern, and are generally scheduled within a couple of days for all other appointments," said Lawson Jolly, the Director of Counselling Services at Saint Leo University. "Additionally, counselors are available in the evenings and on the weekend in the case of an emergency or a crisis."

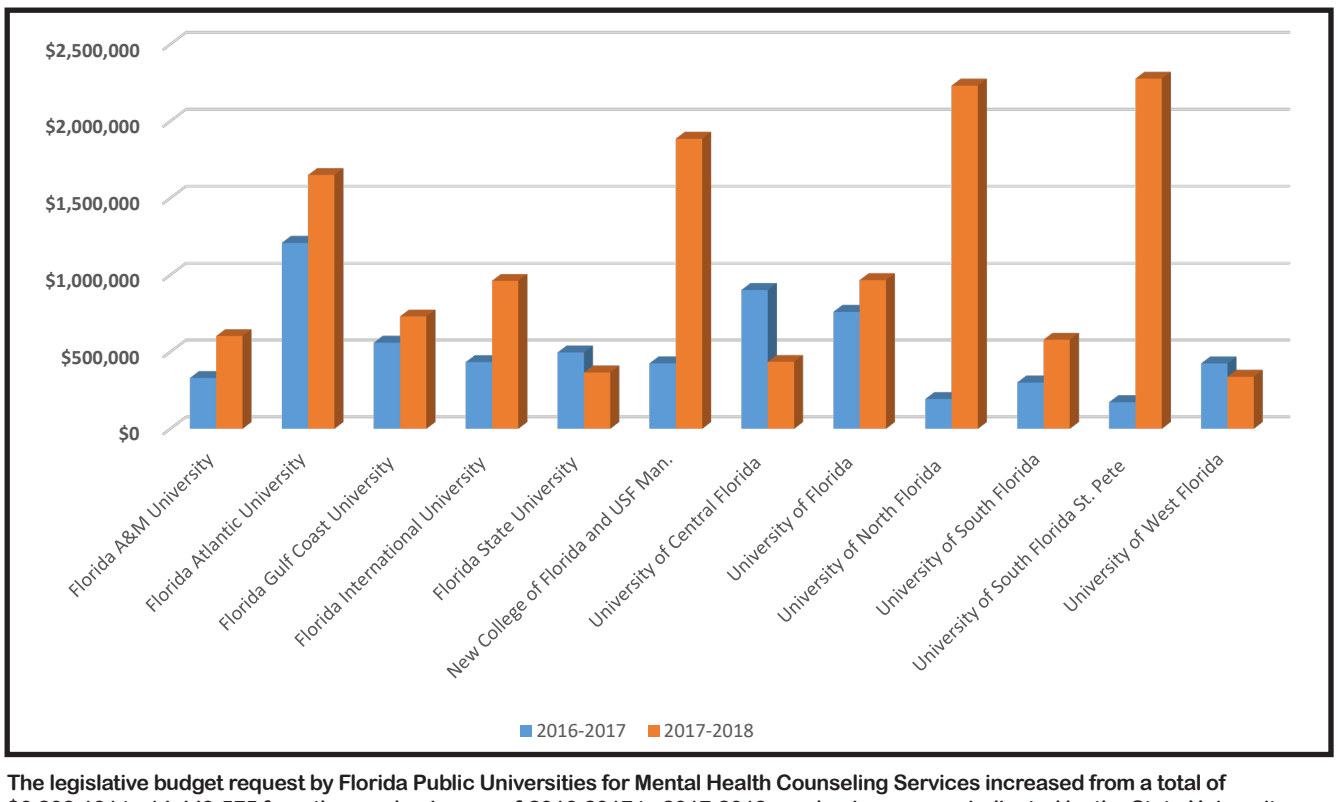
There are three full-time therapists on campus, including Jolly, the director of counseling services. The other two full-time therapist are Krista Jones, the assistant director of counseling services, and Tiffany Nelson, the prevention counselor. Besides doing therapy, Nelson also organizes many of the prevention efforts on campus. Another member of the counselling service team is Machele Nutt, who is the senior coordinator and assists with scheduling.

Regarding the Florida public universities and the budget proposal, the request $14.5 million would be used to fund 137 positions spread across all 12 state universities. The money allocated would give these universities the opportunities to hire more psychologists, mental health counselors, psychiatric nurse practitioners, case managers, prevention specialists, and office staff.

Gomez and Escoto said that this funding would have a dramatic impact on their staffing challenges, according to PalmBeachPost.com.

"My hope is then that we won't have a wait list anymore," said Escoto, according to PalmBeachPost.com, "We will be able to provide care immediately to students and help them be successful in their studies and complete their education in a timely manner."

Mental Health Budget Request



The legislative budget request by Florida Public Universities for Mental Health Counseling Services increased from a total of $6,208,131 to 14,449,575 from the academic year of 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 academic years, as indicated by the State University System Budget Request Forms for the respective years.

Photo by Wakens Leonard

The Saint Leo counseling services are able to provide prevention activities and awareness events, with four professionals working at this department.

Arts & Entertainment

Dare to Watch the Video

By Cristian Martinez
Contributing Writer

The story of "The Ring" that we all know and love has actually been around longer than thought; back in 1998 the first Ring movie was made in Japan based off of a novel created by Koji Suzuki about the legend of Samara, originally called "Ringu." It wasn't until 2001 that the movie started to become an American tale and the horrors of Samara came to our screens. The latest edition to the "Rings" movie series has put a newer spin to the series, and even offers a solution to the curse.

The plot of the Ring series is that if someone had discovered and watched the cursed video, that person would be haunted by an evil presence in the tape, a young girl named Samara. After one has watched the cursed film, they receive a call over a land-line phone; once the call is answered a mysterious voice says "seven days." Next, the person is injured by a mysterious burn that melts the handle of the phone and brands the victim's hand. Everything seems fine after that, except for the fact that the countdown begins after the brand, and there is no known way to stop it; after day seven, the victim dies by "freak accident."

In "Rings" there is a girl by the name of Julia, looking for her boyfriend Holt. Upon digging she finds that he was doing an extra credit project for his chemistry teacher; she goes to talk with the professor and he claims to have no clue as to the man's whereabouts, and tells Julia that he might have grown tired of her and moved on. Julia gets suspicious and follows the professor to an elevator, and sees that he travels to the 7th floor of the building; Julia hears a commotion farther in the hall and finds that there is a secret society of students under this professor's guidance that not only watch the film over and over again, but also attempt to decode it, and figure out what the purpose of the film is and why it is able to kill people who watch it.

The ending of "Rings" was very cliché and quite noticeable about half way through; aside from that, the story was very well planned and the plot had quite a few major twists and turns in it. Sadly, the movie did not recreate the horror the previous movies used to bring and felt more as though it belonged in the suspense or thriller genre. Also, the movie had set up many areas to climax to jump scares to keep viewers interested in the film, but sadly failed to deliver that. "Rings" deserves a 7/10 rating based on three main elements: acting, plot, and a psychologically thrilling story to keep the viewer relatively satisfied and wondering if there will be another addition to the "Rings" saga.

Upcoming Events

Renaissance Festival
Date:
2/6 - 3/20 @ 10 AM - 6 PM
Location:
11315 N 46th St., Tampa, FL 33617
Contact:
813-983-0111
Price:
$12.95 - $20.95
Description:
Visitors can travel back to the 16th century and experience live entertainment including jousting, artisans selling their wares, games, and food and drink fit for a king.

Pasco County Fair
Date:
2/20 - 2/26 @ 4 PM - 11 PM (Time varies on 2/24 - 2/26)
Location:
36722 FL - 52, Dade City, FL 33525
Contact:
352-567-6678
Price:
$20 - $25
Description:
Visitors can experience daily entertainment, rodeos, hay bale decorating contests, livestock exhibits, and family fun.

College Days

Created by Austin Chiavaroli

"Dissection Incorrection"

Arts & Entertainment

A Dog Lover's Tale

By Alison Cobb
Distribution Manager

Photo By @a_dog's_purpose

From Golden Retriever to Saint Bernard, Bailey loves his owners all the same.

On Jan. 27, "A Dog's Purpose" was released in theaters worldwide: a film that follows the life of a boy and his dog. This movie largely pulls on the heart-strings of animal lovers and captures the relationship between humans and their pets. The plot follows one dog, Bailey, as he is reincarnated through several lives and attempts to find his purpose in the human's lives that he touches.

The months leading up to the release of "A Dog's Purpose" were filled with controversy after a video showing from onset of the film was leaked. According to TMZ and Snopes, the video showed a terrified German Shepherd being forced into a pool of rapids. This sparked outrage with the public, many people vowing to boycott the movie and advocate for the safety of animals on set, eventually leading to the cancellation of the premiere in L.A. Eventually the director spoke out against this video, explaining the measures put into place to ensure the safety of the german shepherd and the credentials of the trainers on set. This calmed some, but not everyone. After a third-party investigation of the video, it was deemed fake, cut together to spark outrage and harp on people's emotions.

Viewers argue whether "A Dog's Purpose" took the hit or not; after two weeks in theaters it has brought in 44 million dollars worldwide, coming in on par with similar movies released in the recent years, like "Marley and Me."

Despite all the controversy surrounding the film, it came out as a light hearted piece with both heart wrenching and heart-warming moments. The good scenes can be found in the relationship between Bailey and his young child owner, Ethan, who the audience follows into young adulthood at the same time that they follow Bailey through his many lives. Everyone can relate to loving their dogs with all of their hearts, and dream about them returning in a later life.

Issues in this film can be found in the pacing and the way the emotional content was handled. In the beginning, the audience spends a lot of time with Bailey and Ethan. The audience follows Ethan as he grows from a young boy to a college aged young adult, and the audience follows Bailey as he watches Ethan grow up. About halfway through the movie, Bailey passes away, and is reincarnated with a new owner and a new life. The audience then finds themselves watching Bailey go through several lives, and have lots of doggy deaths in about one-third of the movie.

"A Dog's Purpose" seems to be a lighthearted movie, but it squeezes all of these deaths into one part of the movie and eventually leaves the viewer feeling rather sad. This handling of emotional content is a little harsh. Inherently this movie deals with the death of the dog, but its poor handling of pacing ended up with poor handling of the emotional content.

The last of the movie follows Bailey in what is presumed to be his last life, as he tries to find his way back to Ethan, now in his late 50's. Of course, now a different breed and a different dog, Ethan doesn't recognize him. But when Bailey performs an old trick from his first life, Ethan suddenly realizes that this is his childhood dog, which was a rather cheesy move, but worked for the tone of the movie.

"A Dog's Purpose" portrayed how a dog touched the lives of many other characters throughout the movie. Each character Bailey comes into contact with has some void of loneliness that that he fills, which was relatable for a slightly older audience and a cute movie for kids to enjoy.

Getting past the pacing issues and the issues from the leaked video might take some work from the audience. "A Dog's Purpose" isn't the best movie out there, and could have been better with some more film-savvy hands on board. However, for a relatable movie about a boy and his dog, it fills its purpose.

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Sports

Double Win For Saint Leo Basketball

By Rafal Matuszczak
Staff Writer

On Feb. 11, both of Saint Leo's men's and women's basketball teams won matches against the Florida Tech University Panthers. The games that took place on Saturday evening in the Marion Bowman Activities Center were ones of the last chances for the Lions to play during the regular season.

On the men's side, the Lions managed to score 97 points, which was more than enough to take down the Panthers who ended the game with a score of 76. In regards to the score, the Sunshine State Conference game was one of the most plentiful matches of the season for the Lions.

Two players, in particular, made a significant impact on the game and contributed to the Lions' victory. Junior Antoine Tobias managed to score 26 points during the whole game. The score was the highest number of points collected by a single player on the Lions' side. Not only did Tobias shoot ten baskets out of 11 attempts, but also he assisted his teammates three times.

Senior Marcus Dewberry also greatly contributed to the Lions' score as he collected 19 points. Dewberry, also assisted his teammates 14 times. The number of assists is also the player's personal best as it is the highest number of times he directly helped his teammates score in his entire collegiate career.

According to the Lions' Head Coach, Vince Alexander, the game was one of the best the Lions played throughout the whole season.

"I am proud of our guys tonight and their effort they gave. I think this might've been the most complete game we have had in our two years here. Our guys executed on both ends of the floor and that's what we've been trying to get them to do all year," said Alexander to saintleolions.com.

On the women's side, the situation was very similar. The Lions won the game with a score of 70 while the Panthers managed to collect 65 points. The victory allowed the Lions to maintain their winning streak as they previously defeated Barry University, as well as Lynn University.

During the game, three Lions scored a double digit score. For Senior Chelsy Springs, it was the seventh game of the season where she managed to score more than twenty points for Saint Leo since, during the match, she collected 21 points.

Junior Ragen Dotson also made a very significant impact on the game as she added 16 points to the Lions' final score. The last Lion to score a double was a sophomore, Asia Royster, who collected 12 points. For Royster, it was a fourth consecutive game in which she managed to score a double.

"Chelsy Springs had a fantastic second half and a huge winning bucket in the end. Our point guard play during the last four games has been incredible as Madeline Lang has excelled. Ragen Dotson worked so hard to get her 16, and she is a player who loves the game and trusts the process," said Alexander to saintleolions.com after the game.

While for the men's team, it was the 24th game of the season, for the women it was game number 22. Both of the teams concluded most of their games and there are only a few matches remaining before the regular season ends.

The men come back to action on Feb. 15 to play against Palm Beach Atlantic University. For the remaining of the regular season, the Lions have four games. None of the matches are held in the Marion Bowman Activities Center.

On the women's side, the situation is very similar as the Lions will play the same opponents as the men. Besides Palm Beach Atlantic University, both of the Saint Leo Basketball teams will play against Nova Southeastern, Eckerd, and Rollins universities.

Stay tuned to the Lions' Pride Newspaper to receive more information about the Saint Leo basketball teams, and their remaining part of the season.

Upcoming Games for the Week of 2/17/17 - 2/24/17

Baseball

2/17: @ Albany St. 6 PM
2/18: @ Albany St. 6 PM
2/19: @ Albany St. 1 PM

Softball

2/18: Vs Armstrong State @ Florida Tech Tournament 12:30 PM
2/19: Vs Stonehill @ Florida Tech Tournament 9 AM
2/19: Vs Armstrong State @ Florida Tech Tournament 1:30 PM

W Basketball

2/18: @ Nova Southeastern 2 PM
2/22: Vs Eckerd 5:30 PM

M Basketball

2/18: @ Nova Southeastern 4 PM
2/22: Vs Eckerd 7:30 PM

W Golf

2/20: Vs Florida Southern Invitational
2/21: Vs Florida Southern Invitational

W Tennis

2/18: Vs Nova Southeastern 10 AM
2/19: @ Armstrong State 12 PM

M Tennis

2/16: Vs Eckerd 3 PM
2/19: @ Armstrong State 12 PM

M Swimming

2/17: Vs SSC Championships
2/18: Vs SSC Championships
2/19: Vs SSC Championships

W Swimming

2/17: Vs SSC Championships
2/18: Vs SSC Championships
2/19: Vs SSC Championships

W Track

2/18: Vs Embry-Riddle First Chance Last Chance 8 PM

M Track

2/18: Vs Embry-Riddle First Chance Last Chance 8 PM

With a fast-paced game like this, all moves have a positive or negative consequence.

The crowd waited in suspense, for every point made in the game was needed. There was no room for error.

Photos by Wakens Leonard